

MINUTES
Educational Opportunity Fund
Board of Directors Meeting
September 20, 2001

The EOF Board of Directors meeting was held at Passaic County Community College (PCCC) in compliance with the open Public Meetings Act. Dr. Sang Jin Kim, EOF Board Chairperson, presided.

Attendance

The Board members in attendance were: Al Arce, James Avery, Dr. Herbert Flamer, M. Wilma Harris, Ellsworth Havens, Dr. Sang Jin Kim, and Dr. William King. Ms. Michelle Softley, President of the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund Professional Association and EOF Director – Passaic County Community College, also attended the meeting. Commission on Higher Education staff in attendance were: Dr. Glenn Lang, Janis Flanagan, and Audrey Bennerson. Dr. Dennis Levy - Director of Grants & Scholarships - HESAA, Dr. Steven Rose - President of Passaic County Community College, the EOF staff at Passaic County Community College, and several institutional EOF directors were also in attendance.

Chairman Kim thanked Ms. Michelle Softley for her assistance in hosting the Board meeting. In light of the tragic events that occurred on September 11, 2001, Dr. Kim asked the audience to please join him in observing a moment of silence in respect for our lost compatriots.

Ms. Softley introduced Dr. Rose who welcomed everyone to Passaic County Community College. Dr. Rose stated that Passaic County Community College is one of the most diverse colleges in the State of New Jersey; 5,600 students are enrolled and, with the enrollment of Hispanic students at 52% of the institution's total enrollment, the Federal government has designated the college as "an Hispanic Serving Institution" or HSI. Dr. Rose also mentioned that he is extremely proud of their EOF program, which has been used as the model for all student support services at the institution and has served the college well.

Approval of the Minutes of August 20, 2001

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2001 conference call meeting of the Board. Mr. Arce seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Resolution 5:02 Approval of Proposal to Notice Amendment to N.J.A.C. 9A:11-2.4 Financial Eligibility for Initial Article III Student Grants in the New Jersey Register

Dr. Kim introduced Resolution 5:02 as one of the Board's routine housekeeping activities. The EOF regulations require the Board to annually adjust the income

eligibility scale in accordance with the Federal poverty guidelines and to publish the proposed changes to the scale in the New Jersey Register for a 30-day public comment period. He asked Dr. Lang to provide the Board with the details on this resolution.

Dr. Lang directed the Board members to page 10 (Attachment A) of the Board materials so that they could see that the resolution seeks their approval of the annual income eligibility adjustment to maintain the standard eligibility cut-off at 200% of the Federal poverty guidelines. Using a family size of four as an example, he pointed out that the current income cut-off is \$34,100 and the recommendation to keep the eligibility index in sync with the most recent federal poverty guidelines raises it to \$35,300 for the 2002-03 academic year.

Ms. Harris asked in light of the current situation with the economy what the net effect would be on the number of students served. Dr. Lang stated that the median family income in the State of New Jersey is almost \$60,000 a year and since EOF is using a 200% poverty figure, the program is serving individuals in very tight economic circumstances. The actual median family income of EOF students with a family size of four is approximately \$20,000 a year. The proposed increase in the income eligibility index will permit the program to serve the same number of students currently being served, since EOF operates on an allocated number of students because enrollment is also tied to support services. The EOF allocation ranges between 12,400 - 12,600 students depending upon how you count the students (i.e., fall and spring semester and spring semester only enrollment). Dr. Lang added that he did not think the institutional programs could support a capacity beyond that number at this time. To obtain a better sense of the students served by EOF, he suggested that the Board look at the proportion of students in the lowest cell of the TAG table (NJEI of 1,500 and less) where EOF students represent almost half of that population. Based on the TAG data we know that there are another 12,000 - 14,000 students enrolled in New Jersey colleges and universities who fall somewhere in the EOF income guidelines and receive TAG but not EOF grant support.

Ms. Harris made a motion to approve Resolution 5:02 that was seconded by Dr. Flamer. The motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution 6:02 Approval of FY 2003 EOF Budget Policy Statement & Funding Request for Article III Summer and Academic Year Undergraduate & Graduate Student Grants, Article IV Summer and Academic Year Student Support Services, Martin Luther King Physician-Dentist Scholarship, and C. Clyde Ferguson Law Scholarship

Dr. Lang informed the Board that as a result of the conference call meeting last month, the staff used the restoration model and the HEPI index to develop the FY 2003 EOF funding request that is designed to restore the level of academic year Article IV support to the FY 1995 level. Currently, the program's Article IV appropriation is at the FY 1993

level. The funding request also includes background information about the program and students that will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, the staff is working on the development of a framework for the new governor's transition team and hopes that the funding request will serve several purposes by describing whom EOF students are and the types of services they receive. The bottom line request based on the Board's direction in Article IV is \$14,041 million -- an increase of \$2.7 million over the current fiscal year. In Article III, an additional \$1.5 million is requested, which will increase the academic year student grant at the public institutions by \$100 and by \$200 at the independent institutions. The Board also learned from Dr. Lang that both the Martin Luther King Physician-Dentist and C. Clyde Ferguson Law scholarships have remained at level funding since their inception. The legislation that created both programs targets what educational expenses the scholarships should cover. The medical and law schools were contacted and asked to provide the staff with their current tuition and other costs. The legislation also calls for an enrollment of 60 students in each program. The request for these programs includes what it would cost to operate the program in accordance with the legislation. For King scholarships, the FY 2003 request calls for an increase of \$439,720 and for the Ferguson scholarships, an increase of \$1,088,440.

Dr. Arce asked what percentage of the total EOF budget the summer program represents. Dr. Lang replied that the summer program budget is approximately 25% of the total EOF budget.

Mr. Avery indicated that in addition to submitting this budget recommendation, the Board needs to do everything possible to convey the serious need for additional funding to advance the educational needs of the students it serves and to ensure that the program is considered a priority by the administration. Dr. Lang provided the Board members with a preview of the Commission on Higher Education's draft budget policy statement that supports the Board's request in total and includes amplified language that is much stronger than past years. The language states how EOF fits within the State of New Jersey's needs rather than as a stand-alone program.

Dr. Flamer inquired about the number of graduate grants currently allocated to institutions. Dr. Lang responded that, excluding the Ferguson and King scholarships, the program's allocation of graduate slots for FY 2002 totals 225 graduate grant slots. Dr. Flamer further suggested that we make an effort to increase the number of graduate student grants awarded. The current economic downturn may make the prospect of earning a graduate and/or professional degree more attractive to students. Dr. Lang indicated that to the best of his knowledge the EOF graduate grant is one of only a few grants available to students at the master's degree level. Currently, EOF requires full-time graduate attendance to be eligible for the grant, however, the majority of graduate students do not enroll full-time; they may pursue six credits a semester instead of 12. Based on our discussions with directors, if the Board were to investigate changing the full-time requirement, that would open the door to increased enrollment. Dr. Flamer asked what the impact on enrollment would be if the graduate grant were increased. Dr. Lang indicated that the largest concentrations of EOF graduate students are currently

enrolled in the medical school, followed by the law schools. The amount of the grant at the medical school is \$4,150 annually and has really fallen behind the cost. Dr. Flamer concluded his comments on this topic by indicating that the Board should encourage students who want to earn their Ph.D.'s and should also look at the graduate population and the amount of the grant to see if improvements can be made by next year.

Dr. Lang also shared with the Board that he serves as the CHE's coordinator for the "Minority Academic Careers" (MAC) program. One of the components of the MAC program changed from loan redemption to doctoral dissertation fellowships. For FY 2002, there are ten new fellows of whom four or five were EOF undergraduates, the same breakdown was true of the 2001 fellows. The fellowship consists of \$17,000 annually, plus an additional \$3,000 for mentoring and professional development as well as support for fellows' participation in an organization called "The Compact for Faculty Diversity" - a national organization that grooms and mentors minority doctoral students.

Dr. Flamer suggested that the agenda for the next meeting include methods of increasing the number of EOF graduates who are going on to earn Ph.D.'s in the arts and sciences, with a particular focus on the number of current students, the programs they are currently enrolled in, and what the Board could possibly do to increase the numbers. Ms. Harris inquired if changing the graduate grant to accommodate part-time students would require a change in the EOF legislation. Dr. Lang responded that one of the differences between the EOF and TAG programs is that the authority to make changes in the grant was delegated to the EOF Board of Directors in the original legislation.

Ms. Softley asked if the income eligibility criteria for EOF graduate students was the same as the criteria for undergraduates, and further speculated that many of the students would not be able to qualify for the program. Dr. Lang indicated that while the income eligibility criteria was identical for undergraduate and graduate students, financial eligibility for EOF is established at the time of initial enrollment which would grandfather EOF graduate students who received EOF as undergraduates. As a result, an EOF graduate student who received EOF as an undergraduate only has to demonstrate need to receive a graduate grant.

Dr. Flamer emphasized that he would hope that the Board would encourage full-time graduate enrollment to the extent possible.

Hearing no further comments on resolution 6:02, Dr. Kim called for a motion. Dr. King made a motion to approve Resolution 6:02 that was seconded by Mr. Avery and unanimously approved. Dr. Kim asked the staff to prepare a letter to institutional presidents, EOF directors and the executive officers of the Presidents' Council to share the Board's FY 2003 budget request and to ask for their support. He also asked Dr. Lang to set up a meeting with Acting Governor DiFrancesco and his staff to discuss the Board's FY 2003 budget request.

Resolution 7:02 Approval of FY 2002 Academic Year Revised Article III Appeals for Graduate Student Allocations

Dr. Kim informed the Board that the CHE/EOF staff has received requests for increases to institutional graduate grant allocations, as well as a request from the University of Medicine & Dentistry for participation of the School of Public Health in the graduate grant program. He asked Dr. Lang to outline which institutions were seeking revised graduate grant allocations.

Dr. Lang shared with the Board that the following institutions were seeking additional graduate grant slots for FY 2002: Monmouth University - 3 students; Stevens Institute of Technology - 1 student, William Paterson University of NJ - 7 students; UMDNJ-School of Health Related Professions - 1 student, UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School - 4 students and UMDNJ-School of Public Health -2 students.

Dr. Flamer made a motion to approve Resolution 7:02. Ms. Harris seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

On this topic, Ms. Ana Class-Rivera, EOF Director at William Paterson University (WPU), was asked to share with the Board how she was able to boost the number of students pursuing post-baccalaureate degrees. First, Ms. Class offered her thanks to the Board for their approval of the funds to enroll the seven additional graduate students. She indicated that the WPU EOF staff has always encouraged the students to pursue a graduate degree. One of the goals of all EOF programs is to encourage their students to effect change in their communities and WPU accomplishes this goal by emphasizing leadership development. The leadership development activities start with the summer program and continue throughout the student's undergraduate career. Success breeds success and as the undergraduates see their peers pursuing graduate school it serves as encouragement for them to follow in their footsteps.

Resolution 8:02 Approval of EOF Board of Directors Memorandum of Understanding with INROADS

Dr. Lang informed the Board that the "memorandum of understanding" between the EOF Board and INROADS would not be presented at this meeting because INROADS has experienced a turnover in staff, which delayed discussions.

Ms. Softley indicated that representatives from INROADS have visited several EOF programs and there are EOF students serving as interns. Additionally, she sought clarification from the Board's perspective of their expectations for the partnership between INROADS and the institutional EOF programs, more specifically how the relationship would differ from what currently takes place.

Dr. Lang stated that INROADS desires to initiate a formal recruitment of EOF students; beyond the few programs that they currently visit. A review of the criteria that INROADS uses to recruit students (high SAT scores and class rank) does not match the profile of students traditionally served by the EOF program. Several years ago, when INROADS initially introduced their program to NJEOFPA, their selection criteria

excluded a significant portion of EOF students. If the Board and INROADS are able to develop a working agreement, it would have the potential of opening doors to students who may demonstrate that they are among the best and the brightest, but just happen to be at a different point in their career. How large the pipeline will be is something that has to be worked out. Dr. Lang further stated his belief that the CHE/EOF staff will be able to meet with INROADS very soon to complete this process for presentation at the December EOF Board meeting

OLD BUSINESS

Gubernatorial Candidate's Forum

Dr. Kim informed the Board that he had a few opportunities to speak with Father Loughran, Chairman of the New Jersey Presidents' Council regarding the Board's participation in the gubernatorial candidates' forum that was being planned by the Presidents' Council and learned that day that the forum has been cancelled. In addition, Dr. Kim shared that he and Dr. Arce were invited to attend the September 24, 2001 Presidents' Council meeting at Rutgers and that he has accepted the invitation. He indicated that he would report the outcome of that meeting to the Board at their next meeting.

Dr. Flamer inquired if the Presidents' Council would be working with the Board on budget issues and advocacy, in particular. Dr. Kim's response was affirmative.

Dr. Arce stated that the Board members may recall from the July retreat that Father Loughran indicated that the Presidents' Council was supportive of the Boards' efforts to secure an increased appropriation for EOF in FY 2002, and worked hard to secure the same for their institutions with only modest success. Consequently, it stands to reason that a joint advocacy effort strengthens and compliments each group's purposes.

Mr. Avery indicated that he did not share the impression that the Presidents' Council was interested in working closely with the Board.

Dr. Lang provided the Board with some background on the development of the Commission on Higher Education's statewide budget policy statement, which consists of a consultative process between the Executive Committees of the Presidents' Council and the Commission. The numbers and language used in the CHE budget request and policy statement for EOF were negotiated and discussed with the Commission and the President's Council prior to the release of the document to the public. The leadership of the Presidents' Council is familiar with the Board's concerns and supports its advocacy efforts.

EOF Executive Director's Report

Dr. Lang informed the Board that the CHE was shocked (as probably were several other state agencies) by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) decision to reduce

administrative budgets; thus resulting in a cut to the travel budgets of all units within the CHE. The same thing has happened to the Commission's salary, equipment and some other accounts. The Executive Director of the Commission and the CHE Director of Budget and Finance are currently engaged in on-going discussions with OMB, pointing out that higher education was significantly reduced to a bare bones operation during restructuring. Unlike other state agencies that were left intact at the beginning of the Whitman administration, the CHE lacks significant reserves to fall back on.

Mr. Haven interjected that other departments and agencies of state government are experiencing similar circumstances. Dr. Lang replied that while the budget reductions are occurring statewide, the impact on the CHE is more far reaching because its resources were leaner when compared to other state departments or agencies. He added that this would also impact the Board's travel account, but that the staff will try to work around it.

Governor's Proclamation for Mr. Ellsworth C. Havens

Dr. Kim presented Mr. Havens a proclamation from Acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco, which recognized his outstanding leadership as chairperson of the EOF Board of Directors.

Mr. Havens thanked the Board members and further shared that it is a tremendous honor, as well as somewhat fitting that the proclamation be presented to him at PCCC because he is originally from Paterson. He recalled working at a hotdog stand approximately two blocks from the college when he received the letter informing him that he was eligible for EOF student grant funds and would be able to attend Rutgers University.

New Business

Mr. Havens informed the Board that as a follow-up to previous discussions, he was recently involved with a meeting of the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) where their goals and plans for the year were discussed. One of the goals of that association is to address the critical statewide shortage of health care personnel and to aggressively work on developing sufficient funding for educational initiatives in health care professional services. He further stated that this is also a concern of the Board and members of NJEOFPA have also expressed a desire to strengthen services in this area along with math and science. The NJHA has expressed an interest in working with the Board on EOF's behalf to advocate with the legislature for additional funding of courses/services to strengthen the health related professions for undergraduate and graduate students. Mr. Havens agreed to coordinate that effort if the Board desired to pursue NJHA's offer.

Dr. Flamer expressed support for the idea and inquired about what would be needed to formalize the cooperation between the NJHA and the Board. He indicated that this is an excellent opportunity to work with the community colleges to bolster enrollment, retention and graduation of EOF students in their allied health programs and with all of the institutions that have nursing programs. Mr. Havens indicated that he did not believe

a formal agreement was necessary -- only the endorsement of the Board to continue to act on their behalf.

Dr. Kim indicated that it sounds like a very interesting proposition. Further, he sought and received the Board's general endorsement of Mr. Havens continuing to serve as the Board's representative on this issue.

NJEOFPA Announcements

Ms. Softley informed the Board that the Association's second annual fall conference would be held on October 19, 2001 at The College of Saint Elizabeth. The annual EOF spring conference and student leadership day conference and awards program is tentatively scheduled for the first week in April. A specific location has not been identified yet. In addition, the executive board of NJEOFPA will be holding their retreat next week and she asked if there was anything the Board members would like the Association to consider as they plan their activities for the next two years. Ms. Softley added that she would add to their agenda a discussion of allied health/nursing. The Board also learned that NJEOFPA is continuing their efforts to secure a supplemental appropriation for Article IV funds for this current fiscal year.

Mr. Arce thanked the EOF directors and staff members for attending the meeting. He remarked that he saw no reason why the EOF Board meetings did not have a representative from every institutional EOF program in attendance. The Board discusses critical issues that impact every institutional program and it is important that all program administrators be represented. Perhaps the Board should consider developing a methodology (carrot and stick) to encourage the attendance of the institutional EOF administrators at Board meetings.

Adjournment

Dr. King made a motion for adjournment that was seconded by Mr. Avery. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.